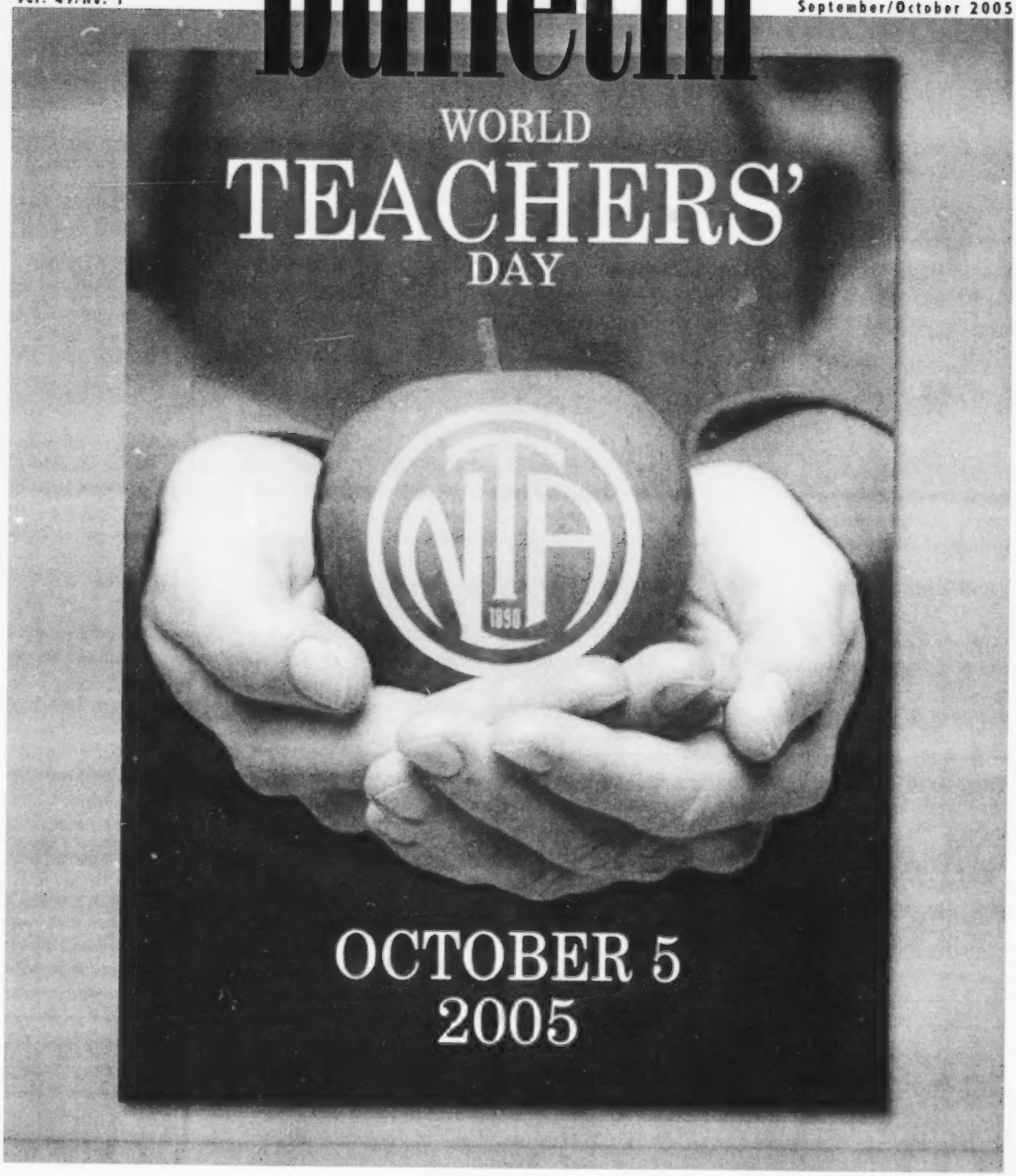
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE bulletin

Vol. 49/No. 1

September/October 2005



Up Front from the President

The MV Sir Robert Bond set sail from Lewisporte in late August on its day-and-a-half long voyage through iceberg alley, on its way to Goose Bay, without me. This marks the first time in many years that I wasn't on board. It is also the first time in 26 years that I wasn't waiting at my classroom door as the students charged in on the first day of classes. They were both missed.

After what I hope was a restful and relaxing summer, I would like to wish you all the best that teaching has to offer in this new school year. A special welcome to all beginning teachers.

Various forms of our media regularly report on some ex-patriot young person who is doing well for themselves on the world stage. Whether it be working as a teacher in Southeast Asia, an engineer in the southern US, a news reporter in central Canada or a varsity athlete in some prestigious university, these young people are confidently taking their places in our world. And they were made right here. And, our teachers prepared them for the world.

A news release by the provincial government last December stated that "students from this province are among the top performing students in the world." This demonstrated fact is a testament in large part to the teachers of Newfoundland and Labrador and should be a cause for celebration for all.

Need we say more? These facts, along with many more, only serve to reinforce the honour I feel at being President of the association that represents you.

Dr. David Dibbon, in his workload study paralleling the above mentioned release, pointed out that the workload of teachers is such that it "tends to 'bleed' into the personal lives of teachers." It appears that we are achieving miracles in education in this province but it also appears that a price is being paid for these miracles.

Teachers, in their conscientiousness, sometimes unknowingly cause the line between their professional and personal lives to become blurred. My personal wish is that we should be careful not to allow this to occur, but in a more concrete way it would be my hope that articles can be added to a new collective agreement that would make it much more difficult for this to happen.

On that note, a collective bargaining team has compiled an opening package, a negotiating team, under the capable guidance of Vice-President Sean Noah, has been named, and your Association is ready to move forward with negotiations whenever the timing is deemed right.

Your Provincial Executive met for the first time in September and will be meeting on a regular basis throughout the school year. These teachers have volunteered to work on your behalf and, I'm sure, would more than welcome contributions or questions from you. They need your input to make decisions on your behalf.

To the many branch presidents, school representatives, special interest council and Provincial Executive committee members, thank you for your work on behalf of teachers. It is through your contributions that the NLTA can function effectively.

After many years on the front lines at the junior high level and with my understanding of the satisfactions and frustrations that teaching brings, I thank you all for your dedication and wish you the best throughout the school year. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible throughout my two-year term of office. Take care.

Kevin

THE bulletin

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The Bulletin is published eight times a year during the school year by the Nfld. and Labrador Teachers' Assn., 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, A1B 1W1.
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Subscription Rate: $16 per year.
For subscriptions and address changes contact Printing Services, Ext. 249.

Deadlines for material are:
November Issue: October 3
December Issue: November 1

ISSN-1189-9662

Member of the Canadian Educational Press Association, International Association of Business Communicators, and the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education.

Printed on Recycled Paper

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Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

Pre-Retirement Seminars

Teachers within two years of retirement eligibility should register for one of the NLTA's seven Pre-Retirement Seminars being held in the fall of 2005.

October 6-7	Holiday Inn, Corner Brook
October 13-14	Holiday Inn, St. John's
October 20-21	Holiday Inn, Stephenville
October 27-28	Hotel Gander, Gander
November 3-4	Mount Peyton, Grand Falls-Windsor
November 17-18	Holiday Inn, St. John's
December 1-2	Holiday Inn, St. John's

These seminars will deal with topics such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, Severance Pay, Employment Insurance, NLTA Group Insurance, Financial and Estate Planning and the Canada Pension Plan. Time is also made available for individual counselling of prospective retirees by the various consultants.

The full text of the NLTA Policy on Pre-Retirement Seminars and the application form to attend a seminar can be found on the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca). A link on the main page called **"Forms Online"** will bring you to the applicable form and policy. Or you can contact the Benefits and Economic Services Division, Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 (*toll free*) or mail@nlta.nl.ca. The NLTA policy will also be mailed to teachers with confirmation of registration.

Given the increasing numbers of teachers eligible to retire, we reserve the right to limit the number of people who will be granted access, depending on the physical facilities available at each site. Consequently, it is imperative that teachers plan ahead and register early in the event that registrations have to be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

UPPER GULLIES

Upper Gullies Elementary becomes Peaceful School

Mitchell Bideaut (Grade 5) and Alyssa Davis (Grade 1) "Citizens of the Week" for June 6-10 holding the membership certificate for Upper Gullies Elementary from Peaceful Schools International.

In May, Upper Gullies Elementary School became a member of Peaceful Schools International. Peaceful Schools International, based in Nova Scotia, is an organization whose goal is to recognize and support schools who have established a safe and caring environment. The students and staff at Upper Gullies Elementary have received this designation through their hard work and dedication to creating a nonviolent environment.

A variety of programming approaches have been taken to promote a caring attitude amongst students, for example, the "Citizen of the Week" program. Students who have shown good citizenship are nominated and each week a student from primary and elementary are awarded a certificate of recognition. Community involvement has also been a priority and has been demonstrated through the school's donations to Operation Christmas Child, the local food bank and the recycling program.

A membership certificate and flag from Peaceful Schools International was presented at an assembly to celebrate Peace Week. Everyday during Peace Week the students from all grade levels participated in an activity relating to the theme of Peace Week: *Making Good Friends by Doing Good Deeds*. Special guests attending the assembly were Mr. Terry French (MHA Conception Bay South/Holyrood), Dr. Darin King (Assistant Director – Programs Division, Eastern School District) and Ms. Krista Vokey (Program Specialist, Eastern School District).

ST. JOHN'S

Physics Day at PWC

In 1905, Albert Einstein published three influential papers that changed the face of science forever. In commemoration of Einstein's "miraculous" year, the United Nations has designated 2005 as the International Year for Physics. On April 12, students at Prince of Wales Collegiate joined in this celebration by organizing "Physics Day" at the school.

The Physics Fair included games, quizzes, prizes and student presentations. Student participation was nothing short of phenomenal, with over 50 displays filling the gymnasium. These displays consisted of poster presentations outlining how physics has influenced humanity and original experiments tabulating results and conclusions. In addition, Prince of Wales students who participated in the Regional Science Fair presented their projects at the physics celebration.

Students participate in Physics Day at Prince of Wales Collegiate.

Local businesses and organizations from the community were an integral component of the celebration. Many experts demonstrated how physics translates into their lives and work. They used a wide variety of props and displays and reiterated how the use of technology and innovation based on physical principles benefits society. The intention in having students observe these businesses and organizations was to alter the paradigm of physics as purely a laboratory science and to show them how physics plays an important and active role in our community.

Students from Brother Rice Junior High also visited PWC's Physics Day to observe the various projects and displays. These students had an opportunity to learn what physics really is and how it influences our daily lives. The physics celebration revealed the imagination of the students, helped them to see how

much fun physics can be and showed them how important physics is to all of us.

A special thank you goes out to all those who participated in this event or donated prizes. Teacher interns Amanda Walsh and Robert Brake, who helped organize the event, said that by all accounts the students felt that the day was a huge success. It certainly helped to promote physics in an exciting and innovative way.

Sharing Our Cultures showcases cultural heritage

The Sharing Our Cultures • À la découverte de nos cultures event, held last March at the Delta St. John's, was in recognition of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Canada's *Racism. Stop It!* Campaign and International Poetry Day (March 21).

In 1966, the United Nations declared March 21 as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This day is a symbol of the world-wide need to end racism.

This is the sixth year that the multicultural and educational event, Sharing Our Cultures • À la découverte de nos cultures, had been held in St. John's. This event is designed to engage new Canadian, immigrant, refugee, and international students in organizing a three-day event to showcase their cultural heritage, and to give teachers and students throughout the province an opportunity to integrate a bilingual, interactive and hands-on approach to teaching and learning about diverse cultures and religions.

For the first time, five students from Makkovik in Labrador joined students in St. John's in hosting cultural booths on the Inuit culture, traditional and modern Inuit games, Labrador traditional Christmas, Time of the Kayak, and Nunatsiavut. In addition, 30 immigrant and native-born students from St. John's, hosted a multicultural and educational fair for over 300 students from the Clarenville area at Random Island Academy. It was the first time this event had been held outside of St. John's and it was well received by students and teachers.

Students who visited the event in St. John's said that they enjoyed the event and "realize that everyone is different and do not judge them for what you do not know". The students felt it was important to "learn new ways of life and help to achieve peace" and that "everything goes 'smoother' when you understand everyone in the world".

Students who hosted the event felt "it was a great opportunity to learn about new and different cultures, and interact with students from around the world". One student remarked: "It is important to have this fair because we get to learn about different cultures of the world, meet new friends, exchange our views, and help in stopping racism which is very important for the present world."

Photo taken at Random Island Academy features drummers Hisham Athas from Sri Lanka and Julian Duarte from Colombia.

The 7th multicultural fair is scheduled for March 19-21, 2006 in St. John's and May 7-8 in Clarenville. For further information contact Lloydetta Quaicoe at Quaicoe@gmail.com.

Assistant to the NLTA President recognized for 30 years of service

On September 15, 2005, Geralyn Costello celebrated 30 years of employment with the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.

Geralyn began her employment with the NLTA in 1975 as Secretary to the Director of Teacher Welfare. After 4½ years in Teacher Welfare (now Benefits and Economic Services) she moved to the position of Assistant to the President. She has held this position for over 25 years.

As Assistant to the President, Geralyn has worked directly with 14 presidents. In this position she is responsible for matters relating to the Provincial Executive Council, branch operations, and assists in the coordination of the Association's Biennial General Meeting. She is responsible for the maintenance of the Association's policy handbook, information relating to school board-teacher liaison, NLTA membership, and Association awards.

Geralyn has a wealth of knowledge about the history and operations of the NLTA and is a vital asset to the workings of the Association. Our sincere congratulations on 30 years of dedicated and outstanding service.

Geralyn Costello

NLTA Scholarship awarded

Lori Powell

Lori Powell of St. John's has been named 2004-05 recipient of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Scholarship. Lori convocated in May 2005 with a Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary). Throughout her university career Lori was awarded two other scholarships – the Ron and Gwen Seary Memorial Scholarship and the Zonta Club Scholarship. She is presently on the Faculty of Education Dean's List.

Lori completed her internship in a Grade 5 class at St. Matthew's Elementary in St. John's. She is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Special Education Degree Program at MUN and will substitute with the Eastern School District while completing her studies.

Lori worked as a student assistant with the former Avalon East School Board for five years prior to beginning her studies. She has a Certificate in Applications for Community Living, a Human Service Worker Certificate, and a Certificate in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention.

The NLTA Scholarship is awarded annually on the basis of academic excellence and character to a senior student enrolled in the Faculty of Education. The scholarship, valued at $730, is awarded annually by the MUN Senate Committee on Scholarships, acting on the recommendation of the Dean of Education.

NLTA Medal winner announced

Jeff Jerrett

Jeff Jerrett of Cavendish has been awarded the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Medal for the 2005 Spring Convocation at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Jeff convocated this past May with a Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary). He completed his teaching internship at Acreman Elementary in Green's Harbour.

Jeff is a member of the Board of Directors of the Burry Heights United Church Retreat Center, was President of the MUN Education Society for 2003-04, Social Chair of the Bowater Residence house executive in 1999, and has been a member of the Cavendish Local Volunteer Fire Department since 1998.

In 2002 Jeff was a participant in a trip to Mexico with the Cuernavaca Center of Intercultural Dialogue and Development. He is certified in emergency first aid, holds a certificate in suicide intervention and was nominated for the Burke Medal of Leadership at the May 2005 Convocation.

The NLTA Medal is awarded annually to a student enrolled in the Faculty of Education who, during his/her academic career, has made an outstanding contribution to the Faculty of Education and to the University. The recipient must be a graduating student and have a consistently good academic record in the professional courses required for the degree. The award is made by Memorial University acting on the recommendation of the Dean of Education.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

NLTA Mathematics League enters 19th season

The NLTA Senior Mathematics League (a partnership of the NLTA Math/Science Special Interest Council, Memorial University, and the Department of Education) is entering its 19th season this school year.

The web-based version of the League, which became available in the spring of 2001, allows any team/student(s) who cannot get to a site-based game the opportunity to participate. This way to play is becoming increasingly popular where getting to a site is a problem. Web-games are available to any school grouping in Canada.

The same game usually takes place simultaneously, four times a year, on Saturday mornings with district schools competing against each other.

Game dates are tentatively set each September with Game #1 in mid-late October; Game #2 in mid-late November; Game #3 in mid-late February; and Game #4 in mid-late March. Game dates in your district may vary slightly so please consult your district Mathematics Program Specialist or Math League contact.

A Provincial Championship Game (Game #5 of each season) takes place towards the end of the school year (usually in late April or early May), with the top school(s) from each district competing at a common site (usually a host school under the NLTA Math/Science Special Interest Council or at Memorial University).

Games are currently developed by problem setters Peter Booth, and Bruce Shawyer of Memorial University, and are distributed across the province by provincial coordinator Paul Gosse to Board Program Specialists who act as local coordinators.

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics, the Memorial University partner, supports a Junior High Math Challenge and other outreach programs. Schools or individual students interested in playing a Math League game on the web, or for more information about the NLTA Senior Mathematics League (and outreach programs of the Dept. of M&S), visit www.math.mun.ca/ and click "Outreach", or e-mail provincial coordinator Paul Gosse at paulgosse@gov.nl.ca.

NLTA magazine discount program available soon

The QSP/Reader's Digest magazine discount program will be available soon, again offering NLTA members a 50 percent discount from the QSP/Reader's Digest magazine catalogue. The magazine and order forms will be sent to schools in the next few days and the magazine will also be available online. Unfortunately, orders cannot be made online but we will have an order form available on the NLTA website for you to download in case copies cannot be obtained at your school.

This year, completed orders must be received by October 30. Orders received after that date cannot be guaranteed for Christmas delivery of the gift card. Subscriptions may take 10-12 weeks to process through the magazine publishers so magazines may not arrive until the new year, depending on their publication date.

Please watch your NLTA school mailing for the information on the magazine discount program or contact Lesley-Ann Browne, NLTA Communications Officer, for further information at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 228 or labrowne@nlta.nl.ca.

Competition aims to improve health and fitness of students

Thanks to the Community Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, school children all over the province are going to be given the opportunity and funding to develop creative projects about their physical health. Studies have shown that students' physical well-being has a significant effect on their learning and long-term success. When young people are well nourished and physically fit they are more eager to learn. Unfortunately, poor nutritional habits and a lack of physical activity are having an adverse effect on the health of today's students.

A new competition, "Fit for School", hopes to counter this by encouraging young people to come up with their own solutions. Starting this fall, students in provincial schools will be encouraged to generate ideas for innovative projects in the areas of fitness, wellness, health and/or physical education that can be completed with funding of up to $1,000 per year. The first contest this fall will involve elementary students in the Western District, but eventually all school levels in all school districts will take part.

(continued on page 8)

The Fit for School competition is sponsored by the Community Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, with assistance from the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association and the Department of Education. The financial support is from a fund set up within the Foundation by the Roberts family to commemorate their father, Dr. Harry Roberts.

The competition deadline is November 30, 2005. Further information is being sent to schools along with an application form. For further information contact René Wicks, Administrative Officer, Professional Development Division, NLTA. Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 245 or rwicks@nlta.nl.ca.

Megan Innis

Lesley Blake

Ella Manuel Award winners announced

Ella Manuel Awards were presented in June 2005 to Grade 12 students Cheryl Hillier of St. Joseph's Academy in Lamaline, Megan Innis from Carbonear Collegiate, and Lesley Blake of Baccalieu Collegiate in Old Perlican. The three winners were selected from many excellent applications received from high schools around the province.

This is the twentieth year in which the award has been given in memory of Newfoundland writer, broadcaster, peace activist and feminist Ella Manuel. The awards are made to young women graduating from high schools around the province to assist in their further education.

All three young women are outstanding students, active in school and community affairs. Ms. Hillier is planning to study engineering; Ms Innis and Ms. Blake are heading for careers in medicine.

(*Note:* Cheryl Hillier's photo was unavailable at the time of printing.)

CANADA

CTF media education project

The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) has received new federal funding to support and promote the practice of media education in Canadian schools and to establish a National Media Literacy Week.

The project is a direct follow-up to the landmark 2003 *Kids' Take on Media* survey which indicated the importance of media in the lives of Canadian children and pointed to the need for young people to develop media literacy skills for daily lives that are infused with information, entertainment, marketing and interactive communication.

The CTF has contracted Media Awareness Network (MNet) to work with them in building support towards a successful National Media Literacy Week in 2006. MNet is a national, not-for-profit organization that provides leading-edge and world-class bilingual media education resources. CTF is represented on its Board of Directors.

The project will consist of establishing an Advisory Committee from among Members; consultations with provincial/territorial Member organizations as well as other education, community and parent groups; the placement of articles in teachers' publications; and the building of a foundation of networks and distribution channels to inform and sustain a National Media Literacy Week.

Memorial
University of Newfoundland

Faculty of Education

New Application Deadline Dates

Program	Start Up	Application Deadline
Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary) FAST TRACK	Spring	Dec. 1
Bachelor of Education (Primary/Elementary)	Fall	Jan. 15
Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary)	Fall	Jan. 15
Bachelor of Education (Intermediate/Secondary) Conjoint with the Diploma in Technology Education	Spring	Dec. 1
Bachelor of Music Education - first and second degree	Fall	Jan. 15
Bachelor of Special Education	Fall	Jan. 15
Native & Northern Teacher Education Programs	ongoing intake	
Bachelor of Education (Post-Secondary) - first and second degree - and Diploma in Post-Secondary Education	Fall Winter Spring	June 15 Oct. 1 Jan. 15
Diploma in Adult Teacher Education	Fall Winter Spring	June 15 Oct. 1 Jan. 15

HARBHAJAN SINGH MANOCHA, 1932 – 2005

Hari Singh was born in Chichawatni, in present day Pakistan, on September 15, 1932. He moved to India in 1947, at the time of the partition, to live in Punjab. Even though he had lost his parents in the ethnic and religious violence of that time, he managed to educate himself and make his own way.

In 1966, in response to an advertisement by the Gambo School Board, he immigrated to Canada and began his teaching career at Smallwood Academy in Gambo. He worked at Smallwood for his entire career, first as a social studies teacher and then as guidance counselor. His rich cultural background from "the far side of the world" made him outstanding as a social studies teacher.

Shortly after his arrival, he abbreviated his name to Hari to accommodate his friends and associates. This of itself is indicative of his sensitivity and adaptability.

Hari had a Bachelors and a Masters Degree (Education) when he came to Newfoundland, and in the summers following, attended Boston University and Bishops University and subsequently earned a Masters Degree in Guidance from Memorial University.

It was in career and personal guidance that he made his greatest contribution. He became exceptionally knowledgeable of the world of work – its requirements and rewards and he had the ability to inspire, encourage and motivate students to take on any challenge. He respected his students as his own children and always maintained the same fatherly demeanor when dealing with them. Religious discipline in his own life was obvious and this allowed him to work by example. It is with respect and fondness that he is remembered by his former students and colleagues.

Hari was forced to retire in 1987 because of health problems and in 1989 moved to Vancouver. He found the climate more agreeable there and so made Vancouver his new home.

In Vancouver he began a new career of sorts, but one very much in keeping with his personal philosophy and life experience. He devoted a great deal of time and effort to his local community but in addition, became very involved with an interfaith group. His wide experience and devotion to tolerance earned for him the respect of other religious leaders and he became very well known both in the religious and academic community.

Hari passed away on January 3, 2005. Devoted to his family, he leaves behind his wife Mohinder Kaur, sons Jugmohan, Gurpreet, and Juspaul and daughters Baljit and Joty.

(Submitted by Roy Snelgrove)

STEPHEN TREVOR SHORT, 1974 – 2005

Yet you do not even know what tomorrow will bring.
What is your life? For you are a mist that appears
For a little while and then vanishes.

James 5: 14-15

And so it was with Stephen's life: one that appeared "for a little while". Yet, what was so important about it was his accomplishments in that short time.

After completing high school at St. James' Regional High in Port aux Basques, Stephen pursued three programs at Universite Sainte-Anne in Nova Scotia, French Immersion Certificate, B.A. and B.Ed., which would qualify him for his first teaching position in 2001.

Stephen's career began with a replacement position as a K-12 Core French teacher at Grandy's River Collegiate in Burnt Islands and St. Michael's Elementary in Rose Blanche, and a one-month replacement at St. James' Regional High in his hometown of Port aux Basques. Stephen returned to Grandy's River Collegiate for the 2002-03 school year as a Grade 5-6 classroom teacher while providing French instruction to the K-6 students at St. Michaels. For the past two years Stephen taught Grade 4 at St. James' Elementary.

While his career was far too short, Stephen made significant contributions to his students and his professions. He served one term as the Communications Officer of the Port aux Basques Branch of the NLTA. He organized and chaperoned a field trip for his senior high French students to St. Pierre in 2001-02. Stephen also served as teacher sponsor for basketball, softball, and Student Council during his stint at Grandy's River Collegiate, as well as serving on its School Council. At St. Jame's Regional High he served on the Science Fair and Christmas Float committees, while providing extra help classes for his students.

Stephen followed his family into teaching. His father, George, taught for 34 years before retiring in 1993. His mother, the late Linda Pope, also taught before starting her family, then returning as a substitute teacher. His brother, Colin, is currently completing his twelfth year.

Stephen leaves to mourn his spouse, Kelly Hatcher, and members of the Hatcher family; his father and stepmother, George and Alice Short; his brother Colin (Tina) and nephew Daniel; his grandparents, William and Audrey Bond; as well as the students, faculty and staff of schools of the Western School Board.

As a special tribute to Stephen's memory, the family consented to the Organ Procurement Program, and were happy to learn that four individuals received successful transplants in Atlantic Canada.

(Submitted by George and Colin Short)

Hari Singh

Stephen Short

Meeting the Challenges

by EDWARD HANCOCK

"WHOOSH!" Did you hear that? Well, that was the sound of summer zipping by. It is hard to believe that it has been three months since schools closed in late June. And here we are... already several weeks into a new school year.

To each and every one of you, I extend a 'welcome back'. May you have a successful and enjoyable year in providing the best possible educational opportunities for your students.

Every school year brings with it new challenges. The classrooms of today are not the classrooms of yesterday, and nothing demonstrates this more than the experiences of our own members. This is something that should be remembered when anyone outside the field of education – be it a parent, a business person, or a politician – presumes to tell you how to do your job. The need for breakfast/lunch programs to feed hungry students, inadequate counselling services for students with psychological or emotional issues, requirements for modified or adapted programs, insufficient special education services, the integration of special needs students into the regular classroom without sufficient supports, and shortages of necessary resources are all realities of today's classrooms. There seems to be a mindset among some people that because everyone has had experience as a student in a classroom (even if it was 30 or 40 years ago) then everyone knows what takes place there and knows what is needed for the classroom to run effectively under today's conditions. That is simply not the case and we must never buy into that mindset.

Education today is confronted with a unique and ongoing challenge. In addition to providing students with the academic, social and knowledge base to succeed in the world, schools are also charged with the responsibility of teaching the values of honesty, integrity, hard work, loyalty to friends, cooperation, etcetera. However, during the hours when they are not in school, young people are inundated by TV reality shows which extol as virtues the abilities to manipulate, lie, connive, deceive and defraud. And if you are the best at it, you win. It sometimes seems that our classrooms are becoming the last bastions of order, civility and tolerance. The challenge for all of us is not to allow education to be reduced to that lowest common denominator as we continue the task of educating the next generation.

Yes the challenges facing education are large, but so are the skills and ingenuity, experience and knowledge which you all bring to the task. Most of us chose teaching because we wanted to make a difference. Continue to make that difference but also recognize the importance of taking care of yourself. Exhausted, over-stressed or overwhelmed, your value to your students, your family, and yourself will be greatly diminished. We all know that teaching (and the myriad of tasks that teaching requires outside the classroom) is not a job that is ever "done" in the true sense. Therefore, you should not be reluctant to put parameters around your own work life. Pace yourself, set aside "me" time (it's not selfish), decide when enough work is done for today leaving time for other activities, and learn to say "no".

It should be heartening to all of us that Canadians continue to regard teaching as one of the most trusted professions. In a 2005 public opinion poll by Leger Marketing, 88% of Canadians indicated that they trust teachers, and teaching was ranked as the fifth most trusted profession among the twenty (20) professions surveyed. (In Atlantic Canada, trust for teachers was expressed by 95% of the respondents, ranking as the second most trusted profession, tied with nursing and outranked only by firefighting.) The support and trust of the public is there. Our ongoing challenge is to see that trust translated into a higher government priority being given to the necessary resources for education.

Your Association is here to support you individually and collectively as you continue to address the challenges. Do not hesitate to get in contact with us if you require support or assistance. Best wishes for a successful year.

Ed

Changes to the Teachers' Pension Act

Transfer of Pension Service from Other Pension Plans

by DON ASH

If you are an active teacher contributing to the Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) Teachers' Pension Plan (TPP), have worked elsewhere contributing to a registered pension plan (RPP) prior to becoming employed as a teacher, and have left your pension service and contributions with that other plan, you now have the ability to transfer that pension service to the NL TPP. Effective May 19, 2005 legislation was passed in the House of Assembly allowing for the direct plan-to-plan transfer of service from plans that do not have reciprocal pension transfer agreements or portability in place with the NL TPP.

The legislation allows the direct transfer of the termination benefit from the other plan to the TPP. The termination benefit is the dollar value available to the member upon termination from a registered pension plan in accordance with the provisions of the applicable Exporting RPP. Based on the actuarial cost of the service under the NL TPP, the teacher can elect to receive the amount of pension service that the termination benefit buys, or pay the difference to obtain credit for all available pension service at actuarial cost.

The NLTA, through the Pensions Administration Committee, has been advocating for pension mobility and participation by government in multilateral pension transfer agreements. Such agreements usually require the transfer of actuarial value between plans. Unfortunately, the provincial government, as plan sponsor of the NL TPP, has been reluctant to participate in this type of reciprocal agreement because of the low funding level of the TPP – approximately 26% – and the potential financial exposure to the plan should large numbers of teachers transfer service out of the TPP. The result has been that NL teachers were unable to obtain any pension credit for pension service accumulated in registered pension plans that did not have reciprocal agreements with our plan. Further, the inability to transfer pension service has created roadblocks or disincentives for teachers in other provinces who wish to come to Newfoundland and Labrador to teach. The Pension Administration Committee is pleased that the government has initiated this step to begin to address the concern of portability, but will continue to pursue our participation in a multilateral pension transfer agreement with all other teacher pension plans in Canada.

Procedure for Teachers to Follow:

1. Teachers must have pension service in another registered pension plan (Exporting RPP) and have left their contributions in that plan.
2. Contact Pensions Division at the Department of Finance (Tel: 709-729-3931/2; Fax: 709-729-6790) to obtain the form "Other Employment Application & Verification."
3. Complete the Personal Information section of this form and forward it to the Exporting RPP for completion.
4. Upon receipt of the completed form and T2151 from the Exporting RPP, forward the forms to Pensions Division. They will prepare a contract indicating the cost to purchase the total service, reduced by the lump sum available for transfer from the Exporting RPP, with options for payment of any deficiency. Pensions Division will forward that contract to the teacher, which must be signed and returned to Pensions Division within 30 days.

Any questions can be addressed by contacting Pensions Division at 709-729-3931/2 and asking to speak to a pension benefit specialist or by contacting an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Don Ash is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Occupational Health & Safety Legislation

Is Your School In Compliance?

by PERRY DOWNEY

Welcome back from a very deserving vacation to another very demanding school year. I trust that your time away has helped you to re-energize your mind and soul and that you are now prepared to once again tackle the many challenges and demands that will come your way during the next ten months or so.

For most teachers, our own health and well-being often takes a "back seat" to the everyday demands and expectations of the profession and to the students that are placed in our care. However, we must be ever mindful of the fact that our own mental health and well-being, as well as our own physical health and safety are of the utmost importance if we are to overcome these challenges and achieve success. The phrase: "If you haven't got your health, then what have you got!" is as prevalent in our profession as it is in any workplace. This brings me to the area of concern and the purpose of this article – the occupational health and safety conditions under which teachers are working, the latest occupational health and safety legislative requirements and regulations governing all workplaces in our province and how you can become involved.

Each school throughout our province is considered, under the OH&S legislation, as an individual work site and each School Board is classified as a separate employer. As a result, both the employees and employers in the school system are governed by the OH&S legislation and thus must be in compliance. During the past two school years, the NLTA, in partnership with the Department of Education, the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association (NLSBA), the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE), and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) have structured a Provincial OH&S Coordinating Committee to assist in and monitor the implementation of the new OH&S Legislative requirements throughout all schools in our province. A lot of work has been accomplished during that period of time; however, as with other ongoing issues, OH&S matters will forever need our attention.

New OH&S legislation adopted in 2002 requires all schools throughout the province to establish and maintain an Occupational Health and Safety Committee (in schools where there are ten or more employees) or a Worker Health and Safety (WHS) Representative (in schools where there are less than ten employees). OH&S regulations also require that, in schools with ten or more employees, an OH&S Program be developed, implemented and maintained. In schools with less than ten employees, an OH&S Policy must be established and maintained as per the legislative requirements.

Throughout the past two years, the Department of Education, in consultation with members of the Provincial OH&S Coordinating Committee, have developed and delivered OH&S training sessions throughout the various school districts to individuals serving on a school-based OH&S Committee or as a WHS Representative. OH&S training is required and thus must be conducted in accordance with the OH&S legislation governing both committees and representatives. As new members are selected to serve on school-based committees or as worker representatives, training will continue to be provided to individuals on a needs basis.

As with all other employers and work sites in our province, both the school boards and each individual school must comply with the current OH&S legislation. Failure to do so may result in charges being brought for non-compliance with provincial legislation. In order for your school to be in compliance with the current OH&S legislation and regulations, the following must be established:

1. OH&S Committee / Worker Representative

• Where there are ten or more employees employed at a school, the school shall establish an OH&S Committee to monitor the health, safety and welfare of the workers employed at the school. (*Section 37: Committees – OH&S Act*)

• Where there are less than ten employees employed at a school, the employees shall select a worker who is not connected with management as a worker health

and safety representative to monitor the health, safety and welfare of the workers employed at the school. (*Section 41(1): Worker Representative – OH&S Act*)

2. Health & Safety Program/Policy (*Section 36 – OH&S Act*)

- Where there are ten or more employees employed at a school, the school shall establish and maintain an OH&S program.
- Where there are less than ten employees employed at a school, the school shall establish an OH&S policy.

3. Membership on Committees (*Section 38 – OH&S Act*)

- An OH&S Committee shall consist of not "less than 2 nor more than 12 persons". (***Note:*** The Provincial OH&S Coordinating Committee has recommended that each school-based committee shall consist of four members: one employer representative and at least one member from each of the unions (NLTA, NAPE, and CUPE) whose members are employed in the school. The employer representative on the committee has often been one of the school's administrators.)
- Individuals serving on the OH&S committee or as a worker representative shall be elected by the other employees on the staff. (***Note:*** The NLTA representative on the committee shall be selected by the NLTA members on the staff.)
- The employer and employee representatives shall elect a co-chairperson from their respective group.
- The employer shall post the names of the committee members.

4. Training of Committee Members/Worker Representatives (*Section 38.1(1) – OH&S Act*)

- Where a school has 50 or more employees, the School Board shall provide and pay for the training of all members of the OH&S Committee.
- Where a school has 10 to 49 employees, the School Board shall provide and pay for the training of the Co-Chairpersons of the OH&S Committee.
- The School Board shall provide and pay for the training of the Worker Health and Safety Representatives at each school.
- A School Board shall compensate an employee for participating in training as if the training were regular work. (***Note:*** Training sessions have been scheduled during the regular hours of work.)

5. Meetings of Committee (*Section 40 – OH&S Act*)

- The OH&S Committee shall meet at least once every three months.
- Meetings shall occur during regular working hours. (***Note:*** Substitute teachers shall be provided for teachers and administrators with teaching responsibilities serving on the committee.)
- Employees shall not suffer loss of pay or other benefits while engaged in meetings.

(Additional information regarding OH&S committees and worker representatives can be obtained by viewing the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission's website at www.whscc.nf.ca/publications.htm.)

As a result of the requirements, all schools are required to have an OH&S Committee or Worker Representative in place at the beginning of each school year. The selection of individuals to serve on these committees or to be the representative should be completed very early in the school year. The Provincial Committee recommends that the selection process occur during the first administrative day at the beginning of the school year and that the first initial meeting of the committee occur sometime before the end of September. Any school which does not have a committee or representative selected by the end of September should contact the NLTA office.

Given the substantial impact that working in an unhealthy and/or unsafe environment can have on an individual's personal health and well-being, it is even more critical that teachers become involved in their school-based OH&S Committees. Even if individuals are not serving on the school-based committee or as a worker representative, it is extremely important that all teachers participate in OH&S. Teachers should be pro-active and provide input and suggestions to their committee/representative in order to ensure that applicable occupational health and safety programs or policies are developed and implemented in their school to address specific health and safety needs and issues. We all deserve to work in a safe and healthy environment, but we all have a responsibility to ensure that such work environments are provided. Remember: "Health and Safety is Everyone's Responsibility".

For questions and/or concerns regarding occupational health and safety issues or issues specific to the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission (Workers' Compensation), you may contact Perry Downey, Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

"Making Copies!"

Teachers and Copyright Law

by STEFANIE TUFF

Making copies is a daily routine and reality in the work lives of the teachers of this province and their colleagues across Canada. However, I would hazard to guess that, while many teachers have developed a highly specialized knowledge of the internal workings of their school photocopier, very few have had the occasion or the opportunity to acquire a similar understanding of the legal issues governing the use of copied material in the school setting. The purpose of this article is to provide a general overview of the relevant legislative provisions and to advise NLTA members of the availability of an excellent comprehensive and current resource on this topic.

The *Copyright Act* is federal legislation that governs the use and reproduction of material and creations that are protected under the Act. The term "copyright" refers to the legal protection of the rights of creators of certain works. This protection is not limited to books and other written publications but applies to all literary, dramatic, artistic and musical works, sound recordings, performances and communications signals, including information available on the Internet. In addition, it is important to realize that registration of copyright under the Act is not required in order for the Act to apply – copyright exists automatically upon creation of the work. Basically, the general rule of copyright is that the works or creations of others should not be used without their permission unless the use falls within one of the exceptions set out in the Act or the use has been specifically authorized by the author/creator. This rule applies to everything from photocopying a worksheet to pass out to a class, showing a video to students, or choosing the script for a school drama production.

At this point, I'm sure the question in readers' minds is: what materials can we, as teachers, copy and/or use in the course of carrying out our teaching duties?

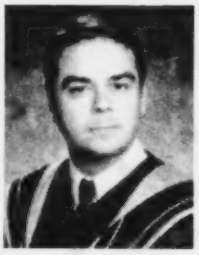
Much of the copying and other uses of copyright protected works by teachers is permissible under the exceptions set out in the Act and/or the provisions of the Access Copyright licence, which covers all publicly funded schools in Canadian elementary and secondary systems (except Quebec); however, it is important to be aware of the rules and allowed exceptions. For example, while up to ten percent of a work can be legally copied in most circumstances, this does not apply to instruction manuals and teachers' guides or to print music. A play protected by copyright can be performed by students free of charge in some situations, but if the performance takes place off school premises or for an audience that does not consist primarily of students, then the applicable fees must be paid. Teachers, schools and school boards should be aware of their rights and obligations with respect to the use of copyrighted works for educational purposes. Recently, the Council of Ministers of Education, the Canadian School Boards Association and the Canadian Teachers' Federation released an updated edition of their joint publication, *Copyright Matters! Some Key Questions and Answers for Teachers*, aimed specifically at informing teachers and answering their questions about copyright law. This booklet provides a clear and concise overview of the general copyright rules that apply to educators. In particular, it sets out the exceptions under the Act which permit schools to do certain things which would otherwise infringe copyright. It also explains the type and amount of print copying permitted under the Access Copyright licence.

I would like to make specific reference here to the issue of Internet publications. The Canadian Teachers' Federation, along with other groups and organizations in the education sector, have lobbied the federal government to enact an amendment to the *Copyright Act* which would allow students and teachers to download, save and share publicly available Internet text and images as part of routine classroom activities. Unfortunately, the government's recently proposed amendment to the Act (Bill C-60) does not address this issue. Lobbying efforts are continuing, but teachers should be aware that copyright legislation applies to on-line material just as it does to other publications/creations.

Copyright Matters! is available to all schools and teachers, and can be accessed on-line at either: www.cmec.ca; www.ctf-fce.ca; or www.cdnsba.org. I would encourage all members to review this booklet and ensure that a copy is placed in your school offices for easy reference and referral by teaching staff.

Stefanie Tuff is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Teacher Wins Second National Award



Mr. Greg O'Leary, an English teacher from Bishop's College in St. John's, was recently awarded the Doctoral Canada Graduate Scholarship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). Mr. O'Leary, presently enrolled in the second year of doctoral studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, is a student in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning (CTL), the largest graduate department at the University of Toronto. Mr. O'Leary is the first CTL student to win the Doctoral Canada Graduate Scholarship, SSHRC's top doctoral award which carries a value of $105, 000 over three years. This is the second national scholarship that Greg has won in the past three years. In 2003, Greg was awarded the inaugural Master's Canada Graduate Scholarship.

The competition for these awards is very keen and involves a rigorous, three-tiered evaluation of a student's graduate and undergraduate record. Besides the importance of grades, students are judged on their potential for publishing and the quality of their research proposals. Students must compete with other applicants at the departmental, university-wide, and national levels of the competition.

Greg, a past recipient of Memorial University's Gold Convocation Medal for Academic Excellence, is presently researching shifting conceptions of literacy in Canada and the Atlantic region specifically. At the Master's level, Greg retraced the history and theory of the English curriculum in Newfoundland and Labrador. He has recently been invited to speak before the National Council of Teachers of English Assembly for Research at Ohio State University and the American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies, which held its annual conference in Montreal at McGill University this year. He is currently working on an edited literacy compilation and a national research project with his advisor, Dr. Peter Trifonas.

2004-05 Drover Awards

Teachers Recognized for Excellence in Theatre Arts/Drama and English

In April two outstanding teachers were recognized and presented with the NLTA REaD (Reading, English and Drama) Special Interest Council Drover Award.

Mr. Tolson Barrington, Drama teacher at Prince of Wales Collegiate in St. John's was awarded the 2004 Drover Award for excellence in Theatre Arts/Drama.

Mrs. Helena Butler, English Department Head at Mount Pearl Intermediate received the 2005 Drover Award for her exemplary work in teaching English.

If you know a teacher who has shown superior work in teaching Theatre Arts/Drama or English and wish to nominate them for a Drover Award, contact Brian Vardy (brianvardy@esdnl.ca) for a nomination package.

Pictured (l-r): Mrs. Helena Butler, Mr. Nigel Drover, and Mr. Tolson Barrington.

Comparing Health Insurance Plans

Is the Grass Always Greener on the Other Side?

by DON ASH

How often at the staff room table have you heard someone criticize the NLTA Health Insurance Plan and claim that some other plan is "better"? Your NLTA Group Insurance Trustees are cognizant of such perceptions and frequently ask me, as NLTA Group Insurance Staff Consultant, to provide information comparing our plan with other plans. However, the difficulty in such comparisons is that we are seldom comparing apples to apples. The answer to the question, "Which Health plan is better?", obviously depends on such factors as the level of contribution paid by the employer on behalf of the employee, the type of benefit desired by the insured member and provided under the master policy. However, the question of which plan is better can include many less obvious factors, such as whether coverage continues after retirement; are there annual or lifetime dollar limits on coverage; who controls and runs the plan; etc.

Many companies in the private sector pay 100% of the premium and offer top quality benefits while employees are actively employed, but benefits and/or employer contribution to premium may terminate or reduce upon retirement. The emphasis in the private sector is often on retaining employees through attractive benefits and maintaining optimum health support of these employees to help maximize productivity. This same level of expenditure and investment in employees is often not found in the public sector. It is therefore difficult to compare the NLTA plan to the myriad of private plans that exist.

Perhaps a more relevant comparison can be made between the NLTA plan and the government plan which covers all public sector workers besides teachers.

The following is the detailed comparison of the major features of the NLTA Health Insurance Plan with the Newfoundland and Labrador Government Workers' Plan. The most significant difference in the plans is found in the prescription drug coverage in that the NLTA plan automatically covers prescription-by-law drugs approved by Health Canada, whereas the government prescription drug plan is limited to a managed formulary, or list of approved drugs. To illustrate, of the top 10 drugs in dollars claimed under the NLTA plan, only four are automatically covered under the government plan. The other six require special authorization for coverage. While there are some differences in the level of coverage in other categories listed below, the plans are relatively similar in structure.

	NLTA HEALTH PLAN	GOVERNMENT HEALTH PLAN
Policy Holder	NLTA	Government of NL
Governance	Board of Trustees consisting of seven teachers (6 active and 1 retired) with decision making authority.	Government controls the plan. A Board of Trustees, with union and management representation oversees the operation of the plans and makes recommendations to government.
Underwriter	Manulife Financial	Medavie Blue Cross
Plan Administrator	Johnson Inc.	Insurance Division of Government
Claims Administrator	Johnson Inc.	Medavie Blue Cross
Employer Premium Contribution	50%	50%
Hospital Benefit	50% of semi-private accommodation (current rate $85).	100% of semi-private accommodation with a daily maximum of $85.
Major Medical	80% of covered eligible expenses.	80% up to $5,000. 90% for expenses over $5,000 and less than $10,000. 100% for expenses over $10,000.

Prescription Drugs	All prescription by law drugs approved by Health Canada except "lifestyle drugs".	List of drugs or formulary recommended by Atlantic Blue Cross. Special authorization is required for drugs not on the list including 6 out of the 10 top drugs in the NLTA plan, for example: Losec (delayed), Pantoloc, Nexium, Neupogen, Plavix.
	100% of drug cost paid by plan (generic substitution).	Same.
	Member pays pharmacy dispensing fee and markup, where applicable.	Same.
	Over the counter drugs not covered.	Same.
Diabetic Supplies	80% of eligible supplies. Insulin pumps under restricted conditions.	80% of eligible expenses. Life maximum of $250 for blood glucose monitors. Insulin pumps not covered. Maximum payment of $1,500 for insulin pump supplies.
Transportation	$0.064 per kilometer to nearest medical specialist. 500 km. deductible. $600 annual maximum.	$0.125 per kilometer for round trips over 160 kilometers. $240 annual maximum.
Paramedical	$200 maximum annual payment for each type of practitioner (some inner limits).	$400 maximum annual payment for each type of practitioner.
Hearing Aids	Hearing aids, one for each ear in any two consecutive years to a maximum payment of $600.	Hearing aids, one for each ear in any two consecutive years to a maximum payment of $400.
Wigs	As a result of medical treatment a maximum payment of $1,000 in any five consecutive years.	One per lifetime maximum payment of $160, unless there is a pathological / physiological change.

Similar coverage is provided in both plans for vision care, private duty nursing, prosthetics, medical equipment, and emergency transportation.

Over 80% of NLTA's total Health claims are prescription drug claims. Teachers have access to the latest and best available medication at minimal cost to the teacher by paying just the pharmacy dispensing fee. For over 50 of our teachers stricken with catastrophic illness, this means over $20,000 of drug costs annually are paid by the NLTA plan for each of these teachers. There is no question that the prescription drug benefit under the NLTA Health Plan is superior to that of Government's Plan. Based on this coverage alone, it would be my opinion that, on the whole, the NLTA plan is "better".

The NLTA Health Plan does not meet and is not intended to meet all needs for all people. Any improvements to benefits require a corresponding premium charge to teachers to pay the claims associated with improved benefits. NLTA Group Insurance Trustees continue to pursue the balance of providing a plan which protects teachers with good coverage while maintaining reasonable premium. Teachers can do their part through maintaining healthy lifestyles and taking time out of their hectic schedules to care for themselves.

Don Ash is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

Suffering from Heartburn? Taking Losec? Read On!

by DON ASH

For years I have watched a good friend of mine popping pills and grumbling about his incessant heartburn after every other meal and beverage. I read an article on Heliocobacter Pylori (H. Pylori) testing, suggested he see his doctor for testing, and one strong dose of antibiotics later he has been heartburn free ever since. Perhaps, I thought, there are some of my teacher colleagues suffering unnecessarily from the effects of the H. Pylori bacteria, thus the generation of this article. H. Pylori is a strain of bacteria that can cause gastritis, peptic ulcers and other gastrointestinal problems. A simple and painless test performed by your family doctor in his office can detect the presence of the bacteria. A program of antibiotics will eradicate the H. Pylori bacteria, leaving the person free from heartburn and other gastrointestinal ailments.

The number one prescription drug in both dollars claimed and scripts issued to teachers in the NLTA Health Insurance Plan is Losec – $383,242 claimed with 3,070 scripts in 2004-05 alone. Losec is used to combat gastro-intestinal problems. Industry experts have estimated that between 20 percent and 30 percent of Losec users are suffering the effects of the H. Pylori bacteria. Besides alleviating teachers from needless suffering, the detection of the H. Pylori bacteria and appropriate antibiotic treatment has the potential for significant savings to teachers and their Health Plan.

Teachers suffering from heartburn, gastritis or other gastrointestinal ailments might consider asking their doctor to test for H. Pylori.

Dress for Success in the Classroom

by MARIE WALL

The Tuesday after Labour Day I saw an immediate change that could not be dismissed. It was at the gym, the mall and at work. I saw people in business suits, shirts and ties, blouses and skirts. Something was in the air; the season changed from casual to business. How we dress has a significant message that we portray to the world and the message on this day was, "back to business".

Dress for success is the image businessmen and women want to convey with the people with whom they work. Dress for success is an image teachers must convey in the classroom and education field. The success you achieve and the clientele you impress may be different, yet the message is basically the same. How you present yourself makes a statement. In our wellness articles we often focus on how to take care of yourself outside the school in order to function best at work. The purpose of this article is to focus on you in the classroom and school, to reflect on how you present yourself and whether it accomplishes your desired effects. Your attire helps set the tone of your class and delineates the student/teacher relationship. This article will consider clothes and how they assist in effectively managing the classroom and the dynamics that arise there.

Dressing for success in teaching may come naturally to some, but others have to work at it. In the days when uniforms were the norm the delineation between student and teacher was visible. Just as expectations for student dress changed, consequently our expectations for teachers have changed as well. Sometimes it may be easier and more comfortable to dress casually, but it can also come with a cost. It may create a tendency for the learning environment to be too causal and thus more difficult to manage. Consider who your clientele are and the message you want them to get when you start your class. Is the message casual or work orientated? Is the message, "I am your friend" or "I am your teacher"? Is there a time or event that may challenge you to dress up more in order to manage the tone in the class?

For a male teacher, a shirt and tie with a pair of dress pants or Khakis have a very different feel than pants and a t-shirt. For female teachers there are a lot of choices, yet the example of business casual can be a good foundation. It presents an aura of authority with comfort. Whether a combination of skirt or dress pants and top, a jacket always dresses up and separates teachers from students. Casual business dress is acceptable in the business world because it has the balance of professionalism and approachability. Consider what you want to say and present it to the world. It is the teacher who needs to make the differentiation from the student. When children are uncertain about the expectations because the teacher has not made it clear, the difficulty arises when the line of familiarity has been crossed. If you expect the student to treat and respect you as the teacher, you have to make it clear in both obvious and non-obvious ways. This will help you in the long term.

New teachers are often faced with a quandary – they are taking on a new role with new expectations, becoming colleagues with people often older than themselves. Yet they may have more in common and be more comfortable with their students. Creating an air of authority early in your career helps to set a firm foundation. In time it can be softened, but do what is necessary to make it clear to all early on.

Substitute teaching and Jeans Day are two specific occasions to pay attention to your attire. When substituting you have to walk into the class prepared; the preparation is often more mental and less curriculum preparation because the lesson plan should already be available. You do not have time on your side so attitude and presentation are the immediate assets you call upon. Dressing professionally lets the students know that you take this seriously and take ownership of the class, that you are comfortable with your authority as the teacher. And if you are feeling uncertain, be prepared to emit an aura of confidence anyway, the comfort will come.

Jeans Day, usually on Friday, already has an air of casualness which can prevent challenges in the classroom. This could, in my opinion, make for a non-productive day and potentially increase behavior problems in the classroom. Depending on the tone you want to set in your class, you may decide to dress up rather than go casual. This sends the message that you are expecting to work and be productive – your students will get the message.

Being clear about the role you play in the classroom is necessary for you and your students. You are in authority; it is your responsibility to direct the class, promote the learning and to develop working relationships. For some teachers the shift from student and peer to teacher and authority is difficult. You may have a problem with being labeled an authority. If so, consider what is meant by this. First, you are an authority in your area of expertise. Others may challenge this at times, but being comfortable with what you know is a form of authority. Some believe it means to act in a way of being authoritarian – to rule as a dictator. Educational research has pointed away from the didactic style towards communities of learners. So your role as teacher is authoritative – a relational approach to learning with you orchestrating the learning environment. This shift challenges us because the line can be blurred and when this happens it can increase stress. The more clear and comfortable you are with being authoritative, the more comfortable the school environment becomes.

Dressing for success it is about making choices. Your decisions increase your effectiveness in managing your class, increase your personal confidence and portray the image you want your students to have of you. It is important for a teacher to know the image of an effective teacher and consider ways to bring it about. Your individual personality needs to come out. You have to be able to look at yourself, know yourself and your limits. Develop confidence in yourself and what you have to offer. Students will learn different things from different teachers, verbally and non-verbally. For some it's humor, for others it's work ethic, and still others, kindness and connections. What you have to offer is your gift to your students. How you present yourself is one area of your professional self. Consider how best to make yourself professional and approachable.

Marie Wall is a Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Marie Wall (ext. 265) or Claudette Coombs (ext. 242). (Marie would like to thank the teachers who provided input into this article.)

Parallel Journeys

by BEVERLEY PARK

At about the same time you stepped into your first day of school this year, I was stepping off a plane in New Delhi, India… and yes, I thought of you. We were both starting journeys of a sort. The parallels were obvious. You had your plan book; I, my travel book. You had your school bag; I had my suitcase. You had your colleagues; I had a tour guide. Although these people would interpret and explain the cultural traditions and nuances of meaning of our new environments, in addition, I had a traveling companion. Not just anyone, but a trusted friend to help me make decisions en route, to share the challenges and joys of the trip, and to help me record key events so that I could look back. (Hopefully, you have been assigned a mentor. Like my friend, he or she will enrich your experience by doing all of these same things for you.)

Although both you and I had anticipated certain things and prepared as well as we could for these journeys, I know that I experienced shocks and surprises, discoveries and disappointments, and at the end of a week, fatigue mixed with fulfillment.

In my travels through India, there were things I totally related to, and others I simply could not fathom. Language became a big issue as I struggled to understand and make myself understood. Does this sound anything like walking into your classroom or school for the first time? In all cases, I tried to be respectful to those around me… never using my sometimes privileged position to exploit others, never allowing myself, the obvious newcomer, to be so vulnerable as to be exploited. In these first days and weeks, I suspect that you, too, will find yourselves in situations where you have the upper hand and at other times you will feel vulnerable. As a traveler, I encountered both VIPs and beggars on the street. As a teacher, you have met and will meet a variety of people in your students, parents, and colleagues. Always, and in all ways, act to preserve your own dignity and the dignity of those you meet.

It's a big world, and I hope to explore more of it, but for the moment I am savoring this experience. My camera was an indispensable tool to document my memories of snake charmers and sadhus, but I also carried my journal. Throughout the day I would write a word or a phrase to capture a special feeling, remind me of an incident or document an encounter. These were moments which, although they may become routine over time, are precious when they first occur. I was awestruck the first time I saw a camel towing a load of cargo, sharing the highway with transport trucks. Later, it became part of the scenery. The very first time a student hands you a picture or a note – his or her way of saying thanks – will be an awesome experience for you. Keep these treasured moments like souvenirs that you can pull out as reminders of the best parts of your journey, especially on those days when you feel travel weary.

My trip, a short one in the middle of fairly hectic work commitments, went by all too swiftly, and though June seems a long way off, you'll be surprised at how quickly your first-year journey will go, too. In the meantime, here in brief, are some of the things I have learned on my travels that may help you this year:

- Plan well in advance! Anticipation and planning not only add to the pleasure of the experience, it also prevents mishaps en route. Imagine going the distance across 12 time zones to be denied entry into a country because you did not have an entry VISA! I saw the frustration of such a traveler, turned back at immigration. It didn't happen to me because I had done my homework weeks before I left Newfoundland.
- Be flexible! Not everything will be as you may have imagined it; some things may even be better! Running water is a "must have" … if it's hot, that's a bonus! While there are certain basics we all need, unfortunately, we do not always have ideal working conditions or all the resources we would like. This is a constant struggle that NLTA continues to deal with. Rather than wait for perfect conditions, sometimes we have to do the best with what we have.
- Treat people with respect! As a traveler, I am an ambassador for my province or country. As a teacher, you are an ambassador for the profession.
- Balance your itinerary! I can't be all scheduled with things to see and do. Both the traveler and the teacher in me gets information overload. Take some time just to renew. Sometimes just kick back and relax.

• Know when to say no, respectfully and without being intimidated or pressured! This is a lesson hard learned from the many beggars (some of them professionals!) whose appeals were so hard to deny. Think of the many demands on your resources (especially your time) and realize that you cannot be everything to everyone.
• Beware of fake souvenirs! As a tourist, I have learned not to buy everything someone tries to sell me. Don't believe everything you hear about your school, your students, or your profession. Find a trusted guide whose advice you can count on.
• Learn from experience! If you do get caught with a plastic "Taj Mahal" that you could have sworn was marble, laugh at yourself and try not to let it happen again.
• Let people help you! Crossing a busy street in a city of 13 million people is much less threatening with a "local" at your elbow to steer you. Asking for help isn't a sign of weakness; it just means you're streetwise.
• Be open to trying new things! I would never have guessed I would have allowed a snake to be wrapped around my neck. The experience presented itself; I measured the risk and just went for it. It's something I'll never forget. The world (and the teaching profession) is filled with wonder. Allow yourself to experience it!
• Most importantly, enjoy the trip! You will never be back here again! Even if you come back to the same class or teach the same students, this particular experience, this first time, is unique. Make it memorable in all the best ways!

P.S. Your very own travel guide for your journey is the NLTA's *Handbook for Beginning Teachers*, which has recently been revised and is currently being reprinted. If you do not have a copy, you can get one by contacting us at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599. Call Beverley Park at extension 244; Susan Cardoulis at extension 246; or Louise King (Printing Services) at extension 253.

Beverley Park is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

The March of the Living Holocaust Tour

Remembering Krystyna

by RENÉ WICKS

"As I stood in that room in Auschwitz, gazing for a long time at Krystyna, I felt the horror of the Holocaust as I never had before. I could see the terror in her eyes, the uncertainty, the helplessness."

Her name was Krystyna. A 10-year-old Jewish girl, she arrived at Auschwitz concentration camp on December 13, 1942. As they did this with all prisoners, the Nazis photographed her first moments in the camp. Three poses. One upon arrival and two revealing her newly shaved head. Through use of a crude headrest the profile shot presented a particular tilt of her head. I wondered if this was something that Dr. Mengele required, to assist his study of what the Nazis considered "subhuman" anatomy. These last photographs of Krystyna are displayed in one of the many buildings of Auschwitz. As I looked around the room there were images of hundreds of children, many showing the same three poses, others documenting the horrible medical experiments conducted by Mengele on children.

My visit to Auschwitz was part of an international commemoration of the Holocaust, called "March of the Living", held from May 2-6 in Poland. Along with two other Newfoundland and Labrador educators, Bryce Hodder (Department of Education) and Brian Vardy (Prince of Wales Collegiate), I was part of a 36 member delegation of Canadian educators who joined 350 other Canadians and approximately 14,000 participants from around the world. The Canadian Educators delegation was sponsored and funded by the Regional Jewish Communities of Ontario (RJCO). In preparation for the event participants were required to read books and materials sent in advance by RJCO. On the first of May we attended an orientation session in Toronto.

None of the advance reading could fully prepare us for the week in Poland. In four days we toured the Warsaw Ghetto and the death camps of Majdanek, Auschwitz, and Birkenau. We listened to survivors tell their stories. At the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw we saw films showing people in the Ghetto, trying to go about their daily lives while stepping over the bodies of children who had died of starvation on the sidewalks. The culmination of the week was the March of the Living, where 14,000 people marched in silence from Auschwitz to Birkenau, to attend a memorial service featuring Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Holocaust survivor Eli Wiesel.

Photo of Krystyna taken by the Nazis at Auschwitz concentration camp on December 13, 1942.

The week was full of so many powerful experiences. I'll never forget a moment of intense contrast in Warsaw. An old man was tending a garden in front of his home, a lovely property of lush grass and flowers in bloom, yet bounded on one side by the Ghetto wall the Nazis had constructed to enclose Warsaw's Jews. At Majdenek, one of the best-preserved death camps, we walked through the shower rooms, moved on to the gas chambers, where ceilings are stained with Cyclone gas and walls are scratched with the fingernails of dying victims. Later we would stand in grim silence by the ovens, then look beyond at an empty wooden cart that was used to carry bodies from the gas chamber to the crematorium. At Auschwitz, balls of human hair and thousands of leather shoes are displayed in cages that reach from floor to ceiling.

Participants in the 2005 March of the Living pass under the entrance to the Auschwitz concentration camp in Oswiecim, Poland.

Our group was honoured to be joined by Auschwitz survivor Vera Schiff, who now lives and writes in Canada. I saw her cry twice. Once during Eli Wiesel's address and again as we traveled by train. As we pulled slowly into a station stop that night, dogs were barking and we could hear footsteps on the platform. For Vera, it brought back memories of another nighttime train ride, over sixty years ago.

As I stood in that room in Auschwitz, gazing for a long time at Krystyna, I felt the horror of the Holocaust as I never had before. I could see the terror in her eyes, the uncertainty, the helplessness. During the Holocaust the Nazis exterminated six million Jews, almost three million in Poland alone. Of those, 1,500,000 were children. Krystyna died at Auschwitz on May 11, 1943, seventeen months after her photos were taken. I guess it was my turn to cry.

René Wicks is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA. Depending on schedules, René Wicks, Bryce Hodder, and Brian Vardy are available to share their experiences on the March of the Living and the Holocaust.

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

Professional Development Programs

Professional Development Fund for Out-of-Province Travel

DEADLINE DATES: THIRD THURSDAY IN SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, JANUARY, MARCH & MAY

Centennial Funds and Awards

Centennial Study Award
DEADLINE DATE: MARCH 31

Centennial Project Award
DEADLINE DATE: ONGOING THROUGHOUT SCHOOL YEAR

Educational Research Award
DEADLINE DATE: ONGOING THROUGHOUT SCHOOL YEAR

International Conference Presenters Program
DEADLINE DATE: NOT LATER THAN MARCH 31

International Programs Award

Equity Issues Programs for Students
DEADLINE DATE: OCTOBER 31

Note: Grants **will not** be awarded retroactively.

Teachers Talking to Teachers Program

Johnson Bursaries

DEADLINE DATE: APRIL 1

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON ANY OF THE ABOVE PROGRAMS, PLEASE CONTACT:

Professional Development Division
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 (toll free)
Fax: 726-4302 or 1-877-711-6582 (toll free)
Beverley Park, ext. 244, René Wicks, ext. 245, Susan Cardoulis, ext. 246

What Constitutes Online Professional Development?

by ALEX HICKEY

One ASCD publication defines professional development as "Continued learning by educators to improve their knowledge and skills." (K. Michael Hibbard, et al, 1996). A short definition perhaps, but one loaded with meaning. Professional development is an internally driven process where the learner willingly seeks to become better at what they do.

Measures of Professional Development

One of the underlying assumptions which guide the Virtual Teacher Centre is that teachers will access professional learning opportunities at the VTC based upon a desire to learn and in time increments appropriate to the learning need. This suggests that there is no single measure whereby one can say the VTC is actually meeting the professional development needs of educators. If we were to measure according to the number of "hits per day" what would that mean? Would it mean that today because there were 110 hits on the site that 110 teachers engaged in a professional development activity? That might be the case; however, the mere presence of a teacher visiting the site does not mean that a learning experience occurred. If we were to measure duration of a visit, would that help us? Not really, if I open a web site and leave the site open while I go for a coffee, what measure of learning do I have?

While these things are interesting to know, they do not quantify learning. The number of users is an indication of the percentage of educators that have placed effort in registering at the VTC. This does provide some indicator of awareness and interest among educators. Does that mean there is no way of knowing? Absolutely not! We can be definitive about the relative value of the VTC to educators as a source of professional development. Before we examine how that can be quantified, we need to look at the types of learning experiences that educators may engage in on the VTC and explore the motivations behind that engagement.

Types of Professional Development

The relative value of a PD experience to a teacher is influenced by the need to improve and the time a teacher can put into the learning experience. One teacher may have her PD needs met through a 15-minute discussion with a colleague using web conferencing tools. Another may need to spend five hours delving into a topic in order to feel satisfied. The VTC offers opportunities for both. Let's look at several scenarios to put it into perspective.

Teacher A

Over the weekend I spent some time with a colleague who mentioned some new research findings she read in a journal. I was interested in finding out more so I visited the VTC and checked Quick Reads and the many journals listed there.

Teacher B

Yesterday someone asked if I was aware of what brain research has been saying about learning. It's been a few months since I've read about it, so I visited the VTC and located a Learning Module titled Brain-based Research and Learning.

Teacher C

A French Immersion Pilot was completed this year. We did most of our collaboration and feedback through the VTC.

Teacher D

I was looking for lesson plans to supplement my Elementary Science program. Someone told me to check out the VTC. I did, and found several excellent plans developed by teachers during a summer institute in Gros Morne Park sponsored by Parks Canada.

Teacher E

Last fall I attended an in-service on the Human Dynamics course that I teach. The consultant told us about the Support Web for the course. I checked it out and I've been back there many times since.

Teacher F
Our graduate studies group met online last week to discuss how to disseminate our research. One of the options I didn't know about, but will definitely use, is the VTC Publishing Centre. Now, I can share my research with all teachers in the province.

Teacher G
This is my last year teaching. There is an online Pension Calculator on the VTC. I can figure out what my pension income will be when I retire.

Teacher H
After I was offered a job on the Labrador Coast, I was informed of a summer institute organized by the VTC in partnership with MUN, the School District and the Department of Education. It was great. I'm looking forward to our online discussions throughout the year on the VTC.

A professional development service such as the VTC should not be limited to a single audience. It must attempt to address the broadest audience possible. That includes the pre-service teacher, the new teacher, the seasoned teacher, the administrator, and other management level educators. It must also attempt to address a wide range of needs that can be satisfied with varying time commitments.

Measuring Success
How then, do you measure the relative success of the VTC in providing professional development to teachers? As we've noted, there is no clear quantitative measure. There are several reasons for this. First, professional development is best defined by the individual teacher, thus a five minute learning experience may be completely satisfying to one teacher, while the needs of another may require two hours. Second, the type of learning experience that is more effective for one teacher may be different for another. This means that one teacher may visit the VTC every month for information or content whereas another may visit only twice a year. In each instance, if a professional development need is being met, then that indicates success. Third, the individual skills and competencies of teachers in the use of information and communication technologies is a factor in the degree of confidence with which teachers' approach online learning. There is still a need to improve skills in the use of technology within our profession. This may inhibit the willingness of a teacher to spend very much time online at the VTC or inhibit their ability to navigate and search out learning opportunities. Four, online learning is a new concept. It will take time to build respect and support for this approach to professional development. As the VTC grows and expands, it will house many more resources that teachers will be able to download and apply in their classrooms.

Given these circumstances, the only way we can truly measure the value of a service such as the VTC is through personal testimony and in the quality of professional development content being made available to teachers. The VTC is emerging as a viable alternative in the delivery of high-quality professional development for teachers.

The VTC exists as a partnership between the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association and the Department of Education and is part of the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation.

Alex Hickey is Coordinator of the Virtual Teacher Centre.
To read an interview with Alex in "Training Magazine" in the United Kingdom, visit www.personneltoday.co.uk/Articles/2005/06/02/30248/Career+file+taking+remote+learning+to+extremes.htm

CTF Annual General Meeting

Reclaiming Our Schools

At the 85th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) in Saskatoon in July, delegates elected a new executive committee and set the wheels into motion for the federation's work and priorities for the coming year.

Delegates elected the following to the CTF Executive Committee: Wayne Clements of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation; Emily Noble, president of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, Roger Régimbal, Ontario Teachers' Federation, and Mary-Lou Donnelly, president of the Nova Scotia Teachers Union. The four vice-presidents join outgoing president Terry Price on the CTF Executive Committee as well as new president Winston Carter, Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, who was elected as president designate in 2004.

(l-r): Wayne Clements, vice-president; Emily Noble, vice-president; Julius Buski, CTF Secretary General; Winston Carter, president; Terry Price, past president; Roger Régimbal, vice-president and Mary-Lou Donnelly, vice-president.

Delegates also called on the national federation to continue its advocacy work as a national voice of teachers in support of a strong and properly funded public education system. The federation will continue to promote inclusive schools, and to oppose commercialism and privatization within the education system. Delegates also adopted a fee increase to $21.80 from $20.40 per teacher per year.

The AGM theme, *Reclaiming our Schools*, focused in part on commercialism and privatization within the educational system, setting the stage for the release of the findings of CTF's recent survey on commercialism in schools jointly conducted with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) and the Quebec-based Fédération des syndicats de l'enseignement (FSE). Some of the survey results are as follows:

- The national average of money raised by schools is $15,700;
- 28% of elementary schools and 54% of secondary schools report the presence of advertising in or on the school – the lowest incidence of advertising is in French schools in Quebec;
- Coke and Pepsi are the most prominent corporations in Canadian schools. Advertising venues include scoreboards, clocks, beverage machines, banners, school signs and gym equipment. Exclusive marketing agreements with these soft drink giants are more common in secondary (56%) than elementary schools (19%);
- 30% of schools report having an incentive program to encourage students, teachers, parents and others in the school community to purchase or use a specific company's products or services. Cash, school materials or equipment are awarded to schools in proportion to the value of store receipts, product labels or coupons collected;
- 64% of elementary schools report promoting Scholastic educational materials;
- 67% of all schools charge user fees for school trips;
- 60% of elementary schools and 49% of all schools fundraise for library books;
- 68% of secondary schools fundraise for athletic programs.

The CTF AGM is the highest legislative body of the national federation that is held every year to report on activities for the past year and determine priorities and activities for future years. CTF is the national voice of over 213,000 teachers across Canada.

Winston Carter Sworn in as President of CTF

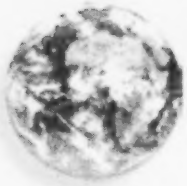
The former President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, Winston Carter, is now President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation. Winston took over the position in July during the 85th Annual General Meeting of the CTF in Saskatoon. He had been elected as President-designate in 2004.

Winston has been a teacher in Newfoundland and Labrador for 31 years. He holds a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Education, and a Masters of Education from Memorial University.

Winston has been actively involved in the NLTA for the majority of his teaching career. He held a number of positions at the local level with the Hamilton Sound Branch and the School Administrators' Special Interest Council and was elected to the Provincial Executive Council in 1995. He became Vice-President of the NLTA for a two-year period from 1999-2001 and during that time was chairperson of the Association's Provincial Negotiating Team. Winston was elected NLTA President in 2001 for a two-year term and during the 2003-04 school year he served as the Association's Past President.

While President of the NLTA, Winston was the Association's representative on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Teachers' Federation. In 2002 he was elected as a CTF Vice-President and subsequently as President-designate of the Federation. His presidency of CTF is a two-year term.

Winston Carter, President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation, speaks to delegates at the CTF Annual General Meeting in Saskatoon in July.



From a View of the World to a New World-View

The Butterfly Effect

by BEVERLEY PARK

"Sometimes it will take years for the change you initiated in a child to become visible or known to you. Most often they are never known. Even if it could have conscious understanding, would the butterfly in Mexico be aware of the effect of his flutterings?"

Perhaps it was NASA's latest expedition into space this summer, and the satellite images of earth being beamed back to us, which triggered my thinking about how we see the world, both literally and figuratively. It was 1967 when we saw our first image of our home planet from space, and in an exhibit called *Massive Change* (Art Gallery of Ontario; May 2005) it was suggested that this view was the catalyst for the preservation and ecology movements that emerged in the subsequent years. All of a sudden people saw the earth as an "island," finite, surrounded by vastness, a small and incredibly vulnerable place. All of a sudden they recognized the need to protect it and the limited resources it housed.

Along with the first-time view of our finite boundaries, this new perspective of our home also allowed people to see the interconnectedness of everything on this planet that we share. It changed "global" into a relevant and understandable concept, because we had seen our globe, not as a plastic orb mounted on a frame and sitting on a classroom bookshelf, but we had seen the real thing. This new view challenged philosophers and scientists and politicians to reconsider their perspectives. And, as I thought about it, it gave me cause to reconsider mine.

Often when I work with teachers I talk about the importance of maintaining that sense of wonder that we associate with childhood; that sense that while we may not always be exposed to new things, we need to be able to always leave ourselves open to the possibility of seeing familiar and common things differently, as if seeing them for the first time. To adapt a quote from the German philosopher Schopenhauer, "the challenge is not so much to see that which no one else has seen, but to see something different in that which everybody sees." So I started to take my own advice, looking at the common realities of my world differently, with a view to making connections.

Counting my time as a student, beginning at age six, I have spent almost 40 years in one educational environment or another. Until this summer I do not believe that I had truly made the connections between them. In my mind I separated the experience of the Kindergarten student in the small school on the beach in Gillams, from the person who left home to go to the opposite end of the country to attend college. I didn't connect the work of facilitating a workshop session for a staff in Port Saunders to the work of conducting a leadership seminar in Malaysia or working with a teachers' union in Uganda. More and more though, I see that all I do is connected, just as everything you do is connected. It's the links that one individual makes to other people, between the work he or she is doing and the community, and finally, to the world that creates the connectedness. Phew! Now you're thinking that I have had one too many cups of coffee or that I need to get a grip! Stick with me!

You have perhaps heard of a phenomenon which is known as the butterfly effect. Simply speaking, this refers to the theoretical possibility that a butterfly flapping its wings in Mexico could have a dramatic influence on the weather patterns as far away as Europe. The tiny wobbles in the system caused by even the delicate flapping of a butterfly's wings – if the conditions are right – could be just the difference that could cause the future to unfold differently thousands of miles away. The author of the butterfly effect refers to these conditions which are conducive to minute moves having major effects as "cusp". Malcolm Gladwell, in his recent book by the

same name, refers to it as "the tipping point". Both authors make compelling cases for the fact that small things can make a big difference. As a teacher I love this idea. It is filled with promise and hope. After all, if you are a teacher you sense that you are making a difference, but you cannot often see the effects. Sometimes it will take years for the change you initiated in a child to become visible or known to you. Most often they are never known. Even if it could have conscious understanding, would the butterfly in Mexico be aware of the effect of his flutterings?

To further illustrate connectivity, it is conceivable that some years from now, the student in your grade 1 or grade 9 class could be working shoulder to shoulder with an immigrant student from Sri Lanka or India, the student of a teacher I have worked with. The ideas I glean from my interactions with you have traveled with me. You are connected to the teachers around the globe because we all have the same goal – expressed differently, actioned in diverse ways, but the same nonetheless.

The "Massive Change" exhibit proposed that as society becomes more global and interrelated there are even greater possibilities for individuals and groups to affect change in a tremendous scale. Although they did not use the term "the butterfly effect", it certainly evokes the same idea. The combination of ambition and creativity is every day proving itself in meeting humanity's greatest challenges. Goodness knows there is no greater challenge for humanity than building it – and that is what we do – one student at a time.

There is no value in trying to say which is the bigger task – trying to meet the needs of diverse learners in a classroom in Macdonald Drive Elementary, offer a balanced curriculum with limited resources in a small school in Mary's Harbour, or create the change that will allow girls in Uganda a fair chance at an education, the opportunity to attend school with their brothers. Every teacher in every classroom or makeshift school has his or her challenges – and sometimes they are almost overwhelming… but there is a beauty and a duty to this profession of ours. And we are not alone. We are connected – by our dreams for our students, by our commitment to our work, by our skills and knowledge, by our membership in the profession. Remember that this year when you are feeling a little overcome, or a lot isolated. Close your eyes and picture the view of earth, the fragile planet. Take your place in the global commons. Flutter your wings. Who knows what you will create.

Beverley Park is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

Would you like to assist teachers in a developing country? Are you interested in learning more about global education issues? Can you see yourself volunteering in Africa, Asia, or the Caribbean?

If yes, Project Overseas (PO) might be for you!

Each year about 50 Canadian teachers are chosen to volunteer on CTF's Project Overseas. On PO, Canadian teachers give their time and talent to offer professional development in-service programs in partnership with teacher organizations in developing countries. Based on requests from CTF's partners overseas, teams of Canadian teachers are formed in January and in-service projects take place in July and August.

CTF needs English and French-speaking Canadian teachers at the primary, elementary, and secondary levels who are interested in volunteering to offer in-services in a wide range of subjects in countries throughout Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean.

Application criteria include:

- membership in a provincial or territorial teacher organization which sponsors PO and is a member of CTF;
- an appropriate teacher's certificate;
- at least five years teaching experience in Canada;
- Canadian citizenship;
- excellent health.

PO is a volunteer experience. Administrative, travel and living expenses are borne by CTF, provincial and territorial teachers' organizations (which are CTF members), CIDA, and the Wild Rose Foundation. No salaries or honoraria are paid to participants in PO and the sponsors do not cover costs associated with substitute teachers or release time.

TO APPLY:

Further information and application forms are available from:
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 (toll free in province)
Fax: 726-4302 or 1-877-711-6582 (toll free in province)

Deadline date for applications: **November 7, 2005**

**CTF'S INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS –
TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

Profile of a Branch President

Aiden Chaytor

Humber Branch

Aiden Chaytor has been Branch President of the NLTA Humber Branch since 2003. He held the position of Vice-President of the Humber Branch from 2001-03 and Treasurer from 1999-2001. Aiden served on the planning committee for CONTACT (2002), was a member of the provincial Communications and Political Action Committee for 2001-03, and is currently the chair of the School Board-Teacher Liaison Committee since 2004.

Aiden has a Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Education from Memorial University and a Master's Degree in Educational Administration from St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia. He is presently a teacher at Regina High School in Corner Brook and is very active in the school community.

Aiden is married to Karen and has two children, Michelle (16) and Brandon (13).

Q. Why did you become a teacher? If you were starting over, would you make the same career choice today?

A. I didn't have teaching in mind as a career alternative until third year university when one of my roommates was studying education. I always seemed interested in his projects and assignments and felt it natural to discuss education with him. Once I realized that I could complete an education degree in two semesters and graduate with a B.Sc. (Biology)/B.Ed. (High School) conjoint degree, it just seemed natural to pursue education. Once I completed my degrees I applied for several positions including lab technician, fresh water enhancement projects, and a teaching position in Mary's Harbour, Labrador. My first position was, you guessed it, Mary's Habour, Labrador, teaching grades 3 to 9, Health Science, and Junior High Science. It was quite challenging, especially since the elementary classes were multi-graded. Once you get a taste of the classroom it can be addictive. Genuine smiles and the respect that most students offer teachers gave me an overwhelming sense of value. The better I became at teaching, the more valued I felt. Would I recommend it as a career choice? Only to those who want to be there... the students deserve nothing less. For teachers who genuinely want to be in the classroom, they definitely make an impact on students' lives.

Q. Why did you choose to become a branch president?

A. Branch President would allow me the opportunity to view another layer in the NLTA organization. As President I would have a greater opportunity to get to know NLTA staff and NLTA policy since I would be communicating on behalf of teachers in our branch. Furthermore, my participation at Joint Council meetings and BGMs over the past several years has given me a great appreciation for the dedication that exists by many members of our association. I firmly believe that the NLTA would be much stronger if more members could experience our organization this level.

Q. If you were President of the NLTA, what would be your first task/project?

A. An all-expense paid trip to ALL members of the NLTA to experience the Dominican Republic... how's that for increasing teacher morale! Barring lack of resources to accomplish this task, I feel increasing membership awareness and encouraging more effective communication are two major priorities. Many of the issues raised by our membership are the direct result of miscommunication and lack of knowledge of NLTA policy. Again, I don't necessarily feel that teachers have the responsibility to know all the intricate details of our collective agreement and NLTA policy. Indeed, there are NLTA staff who deal with policy/collective agreement issues daily, and who sometimes need to check the working and interpretations on behalf of teachers. I believe that many teachers would like to know more about the NLTA but their priority is the classroom – it's difficult to fault this reality.

Q. What do you see as the biggest challenge for teachers? For NLTA?

A. That's easy... WORKLOAD! Our branch represents the interest of 326 teachers in our Association. Although we have a strong branch executive, I feel that general meetings aren't attended as well as they could be. I don't take this to be lack of interest. Many times in staffrooms NLTA issues are voiced and discussed. But many teachers are committed to teaching, and attending a branch meeting takes a backseat to new course preparation, evaluations/correcting, conflicts and other scheduled meetings and other genuine workload related issues. It's commendable to see that workload is such a priority with this round of negotiations. Furthermore, with the support of Dr. Dibbon's report, *It's About Time*, I'm hoping that our negotiating team will make great inroads this time round.

Q. What is the first thing you think of when you hear NLTA?

A. In the past, before becoming actively involved in our Association, NLTA meant an elusive organization that dealt solely with collective bargaining. Only becoming vocal during a negotiation year. But now... WOW! Now I view NLTA as a teacher-driven organization under the direction of a dedicated staff. The importance of school reps and active local branches are stressed by NLTA staff and seen as the pulse of our Association. The NLTA is multifaceted including such divisions as Professional Development, Communications, Employee Assistance. Got an idea for PD? Going through marital difficulties? Stressed out? Want to do some upgrading? Not sure if you have a job next year? The NLTA may be able to help. Need resources in developing a lesson? The NLTA may be able to help (the VTC is still controversial but it's getting better and is on the right track!).

Q. How would you improve education in your community? In the province?

A. First, I would give teacher's more time. Intensification of workload (Dibbon's, 2004) is an understatement. I feel teachers would be more creative, resource-based, and activity-oriented if they were given more time to plan lessons that will better motivate students in their courses. Second, community-based courses developed at the school level (again, more time is needed) would better meet the needs of students that are not post-secondary bound. Statistically, many of the students we teach will not attend universities. Yet much of our educational system (course development, etc.) appears to be geared towards university preparation. Much emphasis is still placed on pencil and paper activities and evaluations. It's time to move away from this particular paradigm and seriously assess the needs of the students and the communities they live in and provide an educational system that supports those needs. Hobbies, for example, have been proven to reduce stress. Students are encouraged to have hobbies but are never given a real opportunity to explore hobbies, many of which may be developed into entrepreneurial ventures. Although many schools have an extensive extracurricular program, many of them are sports related or competitive and alienate students rather than encourage participation. Finally, smaller class sizes can go a long way in aiding teachers to complete the curriculum outcomes. I've taught classes with 16 students and classes with 42 students. Class size influences everything from the way you structure instruction to the manner in which it is evaluated. So, give me a school where teachers have adequate prep time, substantial input in community-based course development and class sizes of 20 students or less and I'll give you a list of teachers more than willing to practice their craft.

Q. If you were Minister of Education, what would be your first task/project?

A. A tough one... but I'd have to say decrease class size. That would have a direct impact on teacher workload. True, you can argue that preparing and evaluating several courses during the same class period in rural schools may be more of an issue. But the majority of teachers are directly impacted by large class size.

Another priority that I could have direct control over as Minister is the implementation of new courses only after substantial teacher inservicing and pending availability of curricular resources!!! Too often teachers have been left to make new curricula work without proper inservicing and resources. I know teachers that were expected to teach new courses without texts, manuals and the necessary resources to effectively deliver the curriculum prescribed by the Department. Whether the unavailability of the material was the result of not being purchased through the proper channels or not available from the publisher at the time the Department expected the course to be implemented, teachers were still expected to deliver the curriculum without proper resources.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR COUNSELLORS AND PSYCHOLOGISTS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE AND AGM

October 20-21, 2005

Albatross Hotel, Gander. This year's theme is *Let's Focus on Solutions*. Day 1: Ms. Ellen Oliver, MUN School of Social Work – "Solution Focused Work with Children and Families". Day 2: Ms. Valerie Anderson (and others), consultants with the Department of Education – "Behavior within the Schools". Registration forms available online at www.cdli.ca/nlcpa/, from your District President or through contact with any member of the NLCPA Provincial Executive. Further information including the possibility of a bus from Eastern will be forthcoming.

For further information contact Tom George (tom.george@wnlsd.ca; Tel: 709-643-9525, ext. 12) or Chris Cooper (chris.cooper@wnlsd.ca; Tel: 709-647-3381).

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION SIC BGM CONFERENCE

October 27-28, 2005

Gander (virtual locations in St. John's and Corner Brook). Keynote speakers are Mr. Stephen Downes of the NRC and Mr. Leon Cooper. This event will showcase some of the latest and cutting-edge technologies available in the province, including the new Phidgets devices. Chester Fidgett will be in attendance! We will also merge distances by combining virtual and face-to-face sessions. Video conferencing and simulcasts of selected sessions, including the keynotes, will be offered for those who cannot make the journey to the face-to-face location. Ask your district program specialist or contact one of your TESIC executive for details, or visit www.cc.k12.nf.ca/tesic.

BUILDING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

November 17-19, 2005

Ottawa. Presented by the Canadian Teachers' Federation, this conference presents a broadly defined vision for inclusive schools. Participants will have opportunities through presentation, workshops and discussions, to examine and develop solutions and strategies that ensure children and youth are not excluded by culture, race, language, socio-economic status, sexual orientation or ability. For more information contact CTF. Tel: 613-232-1505, ext. 115 or email jgall@ctf-fce.ca, www.ctf-fce.ca.

SHARING OUR CULTURES/ À LA DÉCOUVERTE DE NOS CULTURES

March 19-21, 2006 (St. John's)
May 7-8, 2006 (Clarenville)

This is a unique opportunity for K-12 teachers and their students (Grades 4-12 in Clarenville) to experience a bilingual, interactive, curriculum-relevant, and hands-on approach to learning about diverse cultures. The Fair showcases 25+ countries and 20+ exhibits by government and community organizations. Admission is free but space is limited. Registration deadline is December 9, 2005. For information contact Lloydetta Quaicoe, Tel: 709-727-2372 or Quaicoe@gmail.com.

PEACE EDUCATION FORUM CALL FOR PROPOSALS

June 25-27, 2006

Vancouver. The call for proposals invites you to share your knowledge with 2,000 expected participants from around the world who are committed to building peace, contesting global militarism, and making aggressive solutions intolerable. Deadline for proposals: November 15, 2005. For information contact Jane Turner, Chairperson, The Peace Education Planning Committee, BCTF. jturner@bctf.ca.

Dates to Remember

November 2005

Nov 3-4	Pre-Retirement Seminar, Grand Falls-Windsor
Nov 7	**Deadline:** Project Overseas Applications
Nov 15	**Department Deadline:** Teacher Exchange applications to Australia, Britain and USA.
Nov 17-18	Pre-Retirement Seminar, St. John's
Nov 24	NLTA Executive Meeting
Nov 25-26	Joint Council Meeting

ATTENTION SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

The NLTA has set up a **substitute teacher email group**. This group will be utilized to send information directly to substitute teachers through email.

If you would like to be included in this email group, please send an email to **mail@nlta.nl.ca.** Please send this email from the address you wish to receive the information and include your name for reference purposes.

Any questions should be directed to:
Lesley-Ann Browne, Communications
labrowne @nlta.nl.ca
Tel: 726-3223, ext. 228 or
1-800-563-3599 *(toll free)*

Important Notice for New Teachers

New Teacher Kits

If you **HAVE NOT** yet received your NLTA New Teacher Kit, please contact:

Susan Cardoulis
Newfoundland & Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road
St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Tel: 726-3223, ext. 246 or
1-800-563-3599 (toll free)
scardoulis@nlta.nl.ca